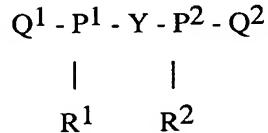


Abstract

New peptide-based gemini compounds comprising two linked chains:



each chain having:

- (1) a positively charged hydrophilic head, Q^1 or Q^2 , formed from one or more amino acids and/or amines
- (2) a central portion, P^1 or P^2 , having a polypeptide backbone, and
- (3) a hydrophobic tail, R^1 or R^2 ,

the central sections of each chain being linked together by bridge Y through residues in P^1 and P^2 ,

are disclosed.

Methods for their preparation and uses are also disclosed. Such uses include transfection of polynucleotides into cells *in-vivo* and *in-vitro*.